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# Chiefs of 2 Koreas said to hold secret summit meeting

By Timothy Elder  
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SEOUL, South Korea — President Chun Doo Hwan and his North Korean counterpart, Kim Il Sung, front-line adversaries in the world rivalry between the communist and Western nations, held a secret summit session on the Korean peninsula this month, according to reliable sources.

The hushed-up rendezvous, which the sources said took place early in November in historic Panmunjom, the neutral truce village in the Demilitarized Zone, was the first face-to-face meeting between leaders of

South and North Korea since the division of the peninsula in 1945.

Although there was no official confirmation by Korean or American sources here that such a dramatic meeting by the top leaders had already taken place, reports have been circulating in this South Korean capital and in Tokyo that such a summit was imminent. The dates most frequently heard for a meeting are December 5 and December 9.

Sources insisted to The Washington Times that the meeting had already been held and noted that in the past reports of sensitive high-level

meetings had been routinely denied only to be proven correct later.

[The Korean Embassy in Washington denied the report, calling it "totally groundless."

["President Chun did not meet with Kim Il Sung," said senior press attache Young Mo Ahn. "The information is from rumor and innuendo."

[Mr. Ahn said that the highest-level contact between the two countries took place at the United Nations on October 29. South Korean Prime Minister Lho Shin Yong and North Korean Vice President Park Sung Chul met briefly at a reception hosted by Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

["Beyond that meeting, there has been no such high-level contact between the North and South," Mr. Ahn said.]

Information was lacking on what was discussed, and the reason for keeping the summit secret remained obscure. But so deep is the mutual hostility between South and North Korea that the mere fact of such a meeting was startling.

The apparent catalyst for a North-South summit, which sources said took place Nov. 9, was a series of international event "spectaculars" being planned by Seoul in the next three years and its desire to shield such events from disruption by Pyongyang. North Korea, in turn, is

seeking a share of the international limelight that will be cast over Korea through these events.

U.S. Embassy officials here said they would not comment on a matter such as this. But there have been enough public indications of the possibility of such a summit so as not to take U.S. officials here completely by surprise. It is known that at least some Americans here were expecting something of this sort sometime next month.

[In Washington, close watchers of events on the Korean peninsula seemed to be taken by surprise.

[They were puzzled that the meeting was kept secret and speculated that a formal announcement was withheld to await the outcome of some other action yet unclear.

[Barring that, they said, the silence may have been intended to insulate the Korean leaders from having to report failure.]

A Korean summit would represent the most dramatic development in a chain of conciliatory moves that began to be forged a little more than a year ago.

These moves, little more than gestures, nevertheless were a step back from the fever pitch of hostility that exploded in the wake of a North Korean attempt to assassinate Mr. Chun during a state visit to Burma in October 1983. The massacre in Rangoon took the lives of four South Korean government ministers and 13 others at the scene.

Ten months before that attack, however, President Chun had announced he was ready to meet President Kim "any time, anywhere" to discuss possible ways to reunite the divided peninsula.

Until recently, Pyongyang had been expressing rejection of the proposal.

A September 1984 delivery from North Korea of relief goods for South Korean victims of summer floods started the two sides on a series of meetings to discuss possible exchanges.

Red Cross talks resumed between the two sides resulted in visits to Seoul and Pyongyang by members of families separated by the division of the peninsula. Another Red Cross meeting — originally scheduled for this week in Seoul but postponed by the North for one week without explanation — is expected to take up possible further exchanges.

Many observers in South Korea and Japan had reported that such a summit appeared to be in the offing following reports that senior officials of the two governments had exchanged recent visits to each other's capitals.

The same sources that reported on the summit confirmed for The Washington Times that North Korean politburo member Ho Dam visited Seoul in early September and that South Korean intelligence chief Chang Sae-dong returned the visit in late October.

The primary purpose of the exchange of visits was to arrange the meeting between the two presidents, the sources said.

South Korea recently has made clear its desire to secure assurances from North Korea that the 1986 Asian games, the 1988 Summer Olympics and other international events scheduled to be held in South Korea will not be sabotaged by North Korean terrorists or other agents.

Mr. Chun also wants similar assurances from Pyongyang that it will not attempt to take advantage of any social or political discord in South Korea between now and 1988, when Mr. Chun is scheduled to step down in the first peaceful transfer of power witnessed by the country since independence in 1945.

Observers here listed such assurances as a likely summit agenda item for South Korea, but expressed confusion over Mr. Chun's apparent agreement to hold the summit in secrecy.

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"From the South Korean standpoint, there is no need to hold a secret summit," one South Korean diplomatic analyst said.

North Korea's President Kim also has a number of issues he is likely to put on the summit agenda, the analysts said. The most prominent of these is a proposal for the two Koreas to issue a mutual non-aggression declaration.

North Korea already has issued the proposal publicly, but South Korean and foreign diplomatic sources agree that the proposed declaration appears closely connected to North Korea's longstanding demand that U.S. troops be withdrawn from the southern half of the peninsula.

North Korea also has sought to have Seoul allow it to share in sponsoring the 1988 Olympics. A round of talks aimed at coming to an agreement on this issue was held last month in Switzerland, but broke up without agreement. A second round is scheduled for January.

According to the Foreign Broadcast Information Service, President Kim gave a speech in North Korea on November 10 titled "Only a Correct Attitude Can Advance Dialogue." Mr. Kim said that at the United Nations meeting the South Korean prime minister "held and conducted a diplomacy of begging."

Another compelling reason for President Kim to join the South Korean president in a summit is North Korea's desire to open direct relations with the United States, the sources said. Washington has refused to entertain improvements in ties with Pyongyang without substantial progress in relations between the two Koreas.

Analysts of the recent dialogues have noted a close parallel with a similar series of talks between the

two sides in the early 1970s. However, those talks ended in deadlock without a meeting between President Kim and former South Korean President Park Chung Hee.

While speculation swirled on the meeting between the two Korean leaders, the top U.S. official for Asia was winding up a two-day visit to Korea. Assistant Secretary of State for Asia and the Pacific Paul D. Wolfowitz briefed Korean leaders on results of the Geneva summit after holding similar briefings over the weekend in China and Japan.